



STAR WARS

RETURN OF THE JEDI



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"Rescue from Jabba's Palace" written by Ivan Cohen

"Return to Dagobah" written by Meredith Rusu

"Flight and Fight!" written by Trey King

"Leia and the Ewoks" written by Meredith Rusu

"The Final Duel" written by Rebecca L. Schmidt

"The Battle for Endor" written by Rebecca L. Schmidt

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STAR WARS®

RETURN OF THE JEDI

Based on the story and screenplay by
George Lucas

Illustrations by
Brian Rood

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Rescue from Jabba's Palace



C-3PO and R2-D2 had returned to Tatooine. The droids were sent to the desert planet by Luke Skywalker on a mission to deliver a special message to the gangster Jabba the Hutt.

At Jabba's palace, C-3PO introduced himself and R2-D2 to Jabba's servant, Bib Fortuna. Then they were escorted into Jabba's court.

RESCUE FROM JABBA'S PALACE

Jabba the Hutt was enormous and slimy, and his court was filled with aliens and monsters. C-3PO was nervous, but R2-D2 wasn't and immediately began the message. A hologram of Luke Skywalker asked to bargain for Han Solo's life. Then it offered Jabba a gift: the two droids!

C-3PO was shocked, but Jabba just laughed. He was not about to give up Han Solo, who hung on his wall, still frozen in a block of carbonite. But he would keep the droids.



Jabba made C-3PO a translator inside his court and sent R2-D2 to work on his sail barge.

C-3PO was surprised when a masked bounty hunter arrived with Chewbacca, Han Solo's Wookiee companion. Jabba bought Chewbacca from the bounty hunter, then threw Chewie into a cell.

One of Jabba's guards looked on. It was really Han's friend Lando Calrissian in disguise. . . .



Hours later, the masked bounty hunter snuck back into the now-empty hall. The hunter began to free Han from his frozen tomb. Soon the carbonite melted, and Han fell to the floor.

Han couldn't see, but the hunter told him that his eyesight would soon return. Then the hunter removed her helmet—it was Princess Leia!

But before Leia and Han could escape, they were captured by Jabba's guards!





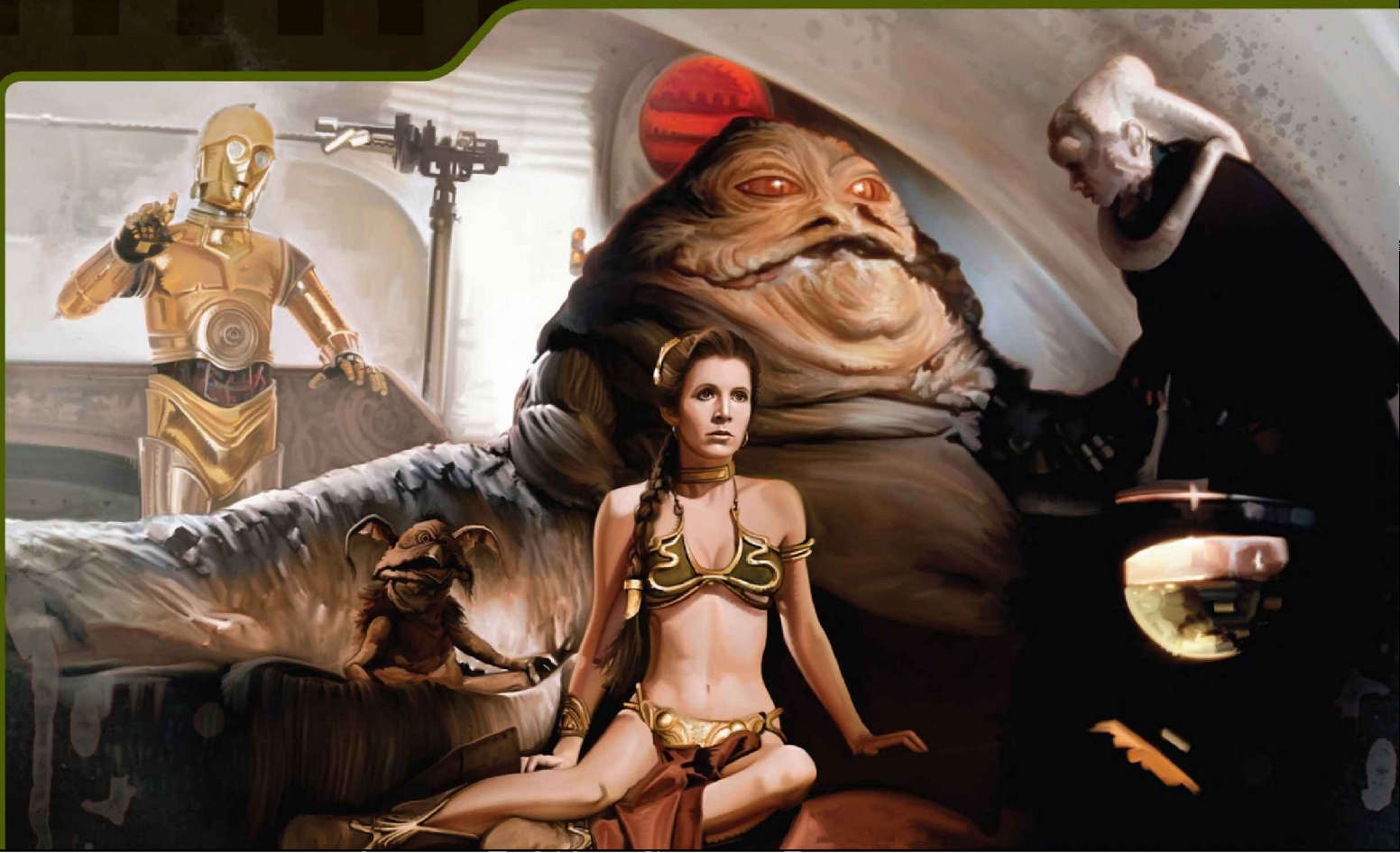
RESCUE FROM JABBA'S PALACE



The next morning, a cloaked figure entered Jabba's palace and approached the court. It was Luke Skywalker, dressed in the robe of a Jedi Knight!

Bib Fortuna told Luke that Jabba would not see him. Then Luke used an old Jedi mind trick to make Bib Fortuna take him to Jabba.

Luke arrived and nodded to Princess Leia, who was now chained to Jabba as his slave.



Jabba knew that Luke had tricked Bib Fortuna into letting him in. “Your powers will not work on me, boy,” Jabba began. “I shall enjoy watching you die.”

Jabba laughed, then flipped a switch, causing Luke to fall through a trapdoor into a pit below.

There, an enormous gate opened to release a huge, snarling monster—the rancor! The beast quickly turned its attention to the young Jedi, who steered it back toward the gate.

As the rancor moved in for the kill, Luke grabbed a skull from the floor and hurled it at a control panel. It was a direct hit, and the gate crashed back down, squashing the giant creature!





Jabba was enraged. He ordered Luke, Han, and Chewie brought to him at once. “They will all suffer for this outrage,” the gangster grunted.

Jabba—with Leia still chained to him—and his men boarded his floating sail barge, while his prisoners were forced onto a flying skiff. Luke and his friends would be thrown into a pit where a monster called the Sarlacc would eat them alive!



RESCUE FROM JABBA'S PALACE

Once the skiff reached the pit, one of Jabba's guards pushed Luke onto a plank that extended high over the creature's mouth. Luke grabbed the end of the plank and catapulted himself into the air!

At the same time, R2-D2 launched Luke's lightsaber—which had been hidden inside the droid the whole time—into the Jedi's waiting hand! Luke ignited the saber and quickly went on the attack.

Jabba's men attacked back, and Lando fell off the skiff! Han and Chewie sprang into action and rescued their friend before the Sarlacc could finish him off.

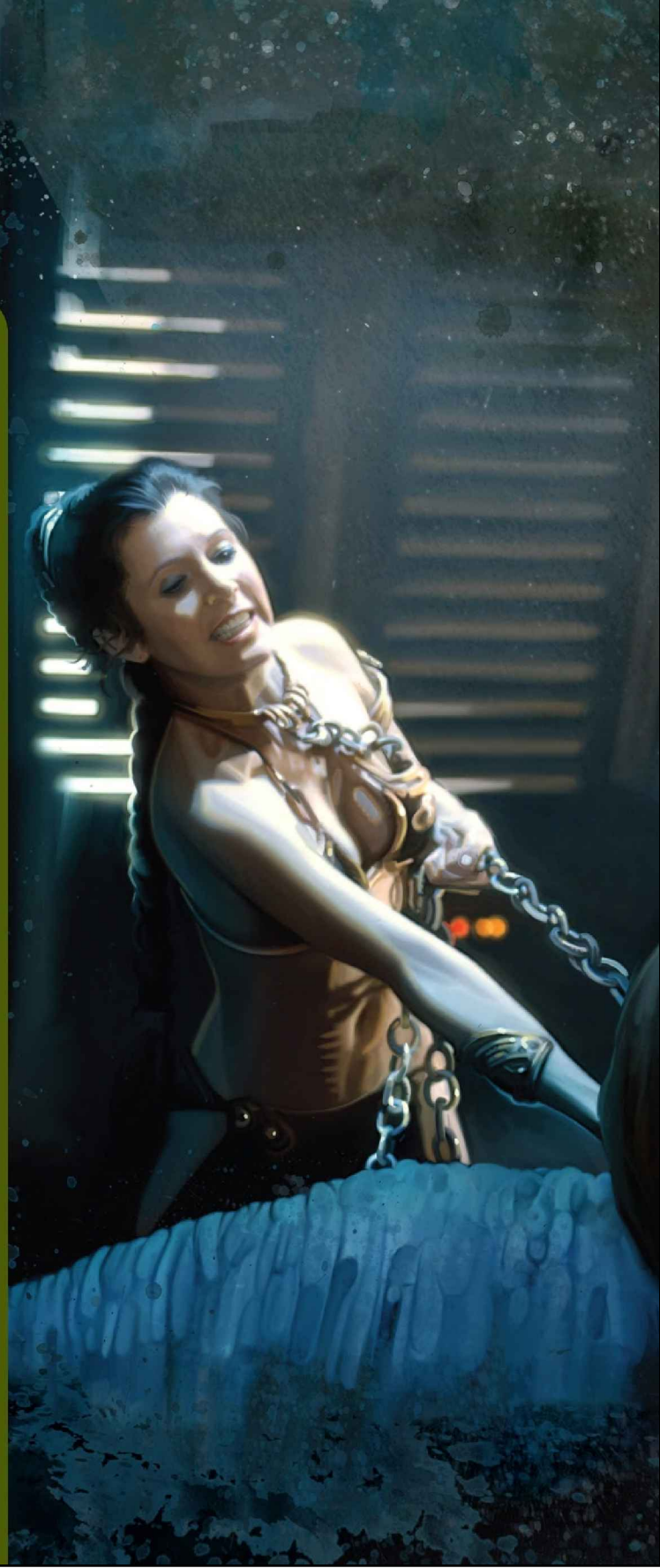




Back on the sail barge, Leia took advantage of the commotion and attacked Jabba the Hutt.

She threw her chains around Jabba and pulled as hard as she could. Because of Leia, Jabba would never enslave anyone else again.

Then R2-D2 arrived to free her. The little droid fired a small laser, breaking the chain that kept Leia from escaping. Together, they found C-3PO and raced to the barge's upper deck.





On the upper deck, Luke Skywalker was busy deflecting blaster fire with his lightsaber. When Princess Leia arrived, Luke was fighting off the last of Jabba's men.

Luke told Leia to point the barge's cannon down at the deck. They were going to blow up the sail barge!



R2 pushed C-3PO off the ship and then followed him to safety.

Once Luke was sure that the droids were okay, he grabbed a rigging rope in one arm and Leia in the other. Then the young Jedi kicked the trigger, and the cannon blasted the deck. Luke and Leia swung out toward the skiff as the cannon continued to fire!



Luke and Leia landed back on the skiff with Han and Chewie.

“Don’t forget the droids!” Luke yelled to his friends. Lando was at the controls and immediately steered the skiff away from the sail barge toward the droids.

Lando found the droids stuck in the sand and used the skiff’s magnets to pull them on board. Then he punched the controls, and the skiff flew across the desert. Behind them, Jabba’s sail barge disappeared in a final fiery explosion.



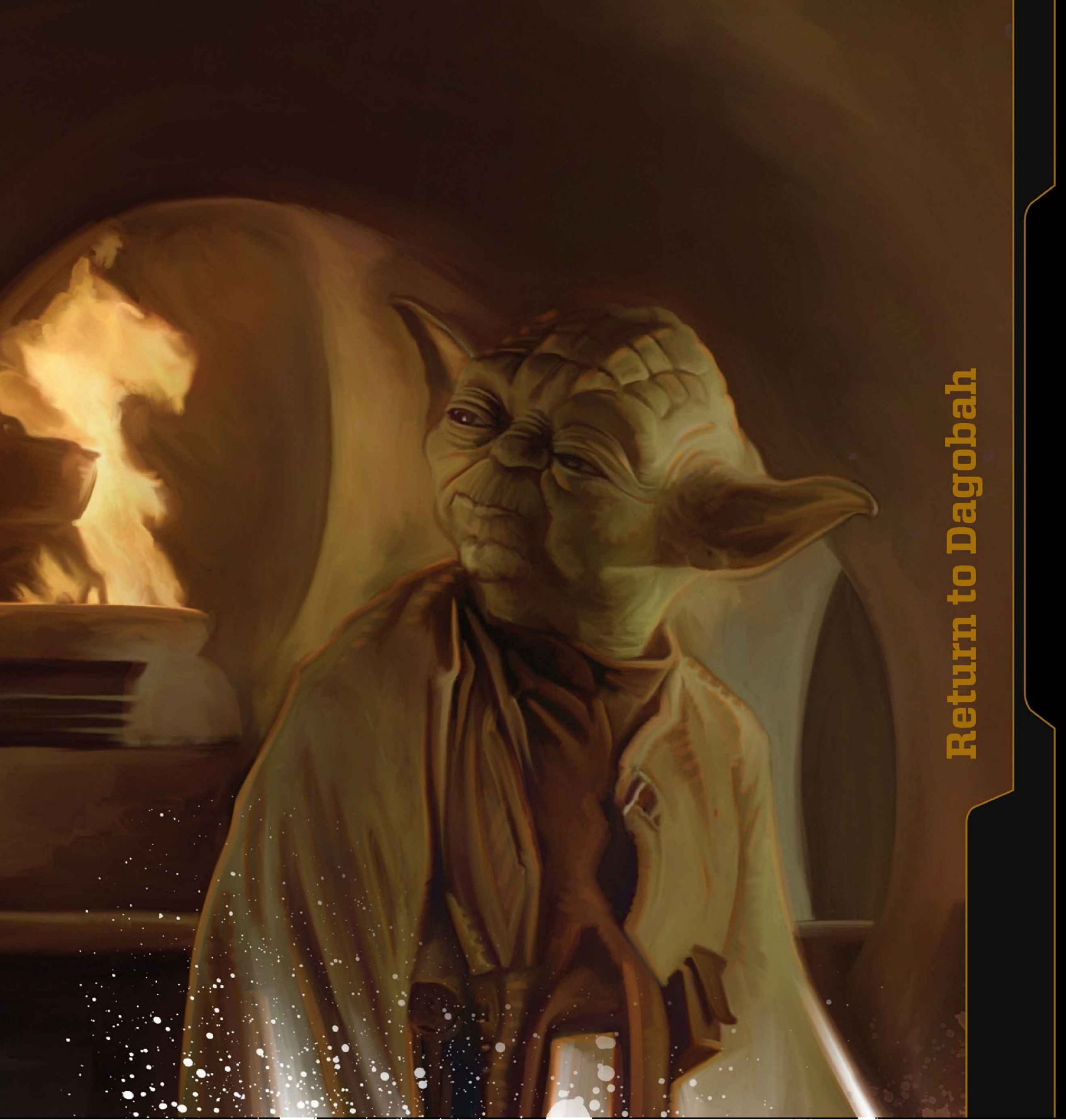
RESCUE FROM JABBA'S PALACE



As the heroes got into their ships, Han called out to Luke. “Thanks for coming after me,” Han said to the young Jedi. “I owe you one.”

With Han rescued and Jabba the Hutt defeated, the heroes rocketed away from Tatooine for the last time. They were now ready to take on an even bigger challenge—the evil Emperor!





Return to Dagobah

Luke Skywalker piloted his X-wing through space. “I’ll meet you back at the fleet,” he told Leia through the ship’s communicator.

“Hurry. The Alliance should be assembled by now,” Leia replied.

Luke smiled. “I will.” He knew the Rebel Alliance would need all the help it could get in its next mission against the Empire. But first Luke had a mission of his own.

On top of the ship, R2-D2 beeped and booped.

“That’s right, Artoo, we’re going to the Dagobah system,” Luke said. “I have a promise to keep to an old friend.”

Thick mist hung low over the swamp planet of Dagobah. To anyone else, it would not be an inviting place. But Luke wasn’t afraid. After all, this was where he had begun his Jedi training with Master Yoda long ago.

Luke landed and headed straight toward the flickering lights of a hut covered by overgrowth at the edge of the swamp.

RETURN TO DAGOBAH



Inside, Luke found Yoda. But the Jedi Master didn't look well. "Sick have I become," Yoda told Luke. Yoda had a habit of speaking words out of order, but Luke understood him. "Old and weak," Yoda continued. "Soon will I rest. Forever sleep."

Luke was concerned. "Master Yoda, you can't die. I need your help."

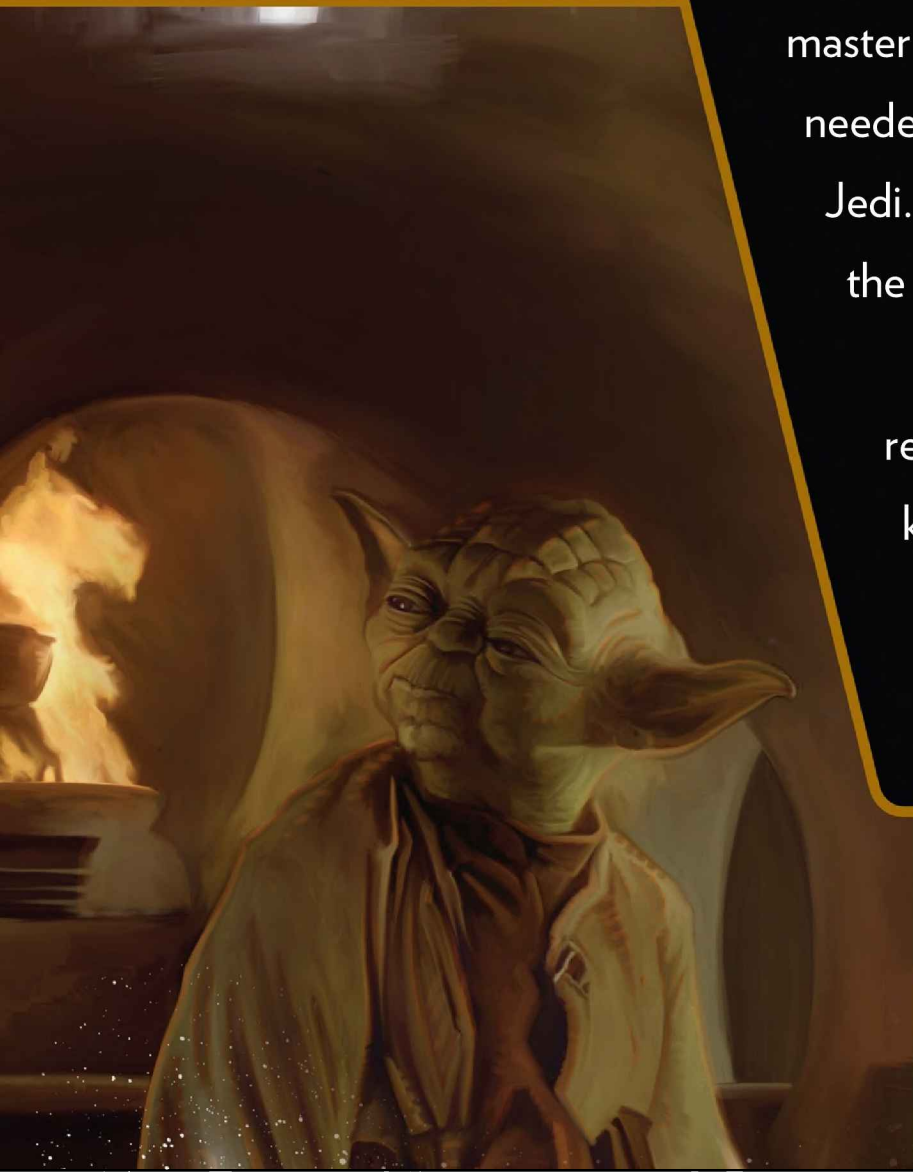


The old Jedi Master shook his head.
“Strong am I with the Force. But not that strong.”

Luke didn't like hearing his old master talk that way. Besides, he needed Yoda's help to become a full Jedi. “I've come back to complete the training,” Luke insisted.

“No more training do you require,” said Yoda. “Already know you that which you need.”

Luke thought about Yoda's words. “Then I am a Jedi.”

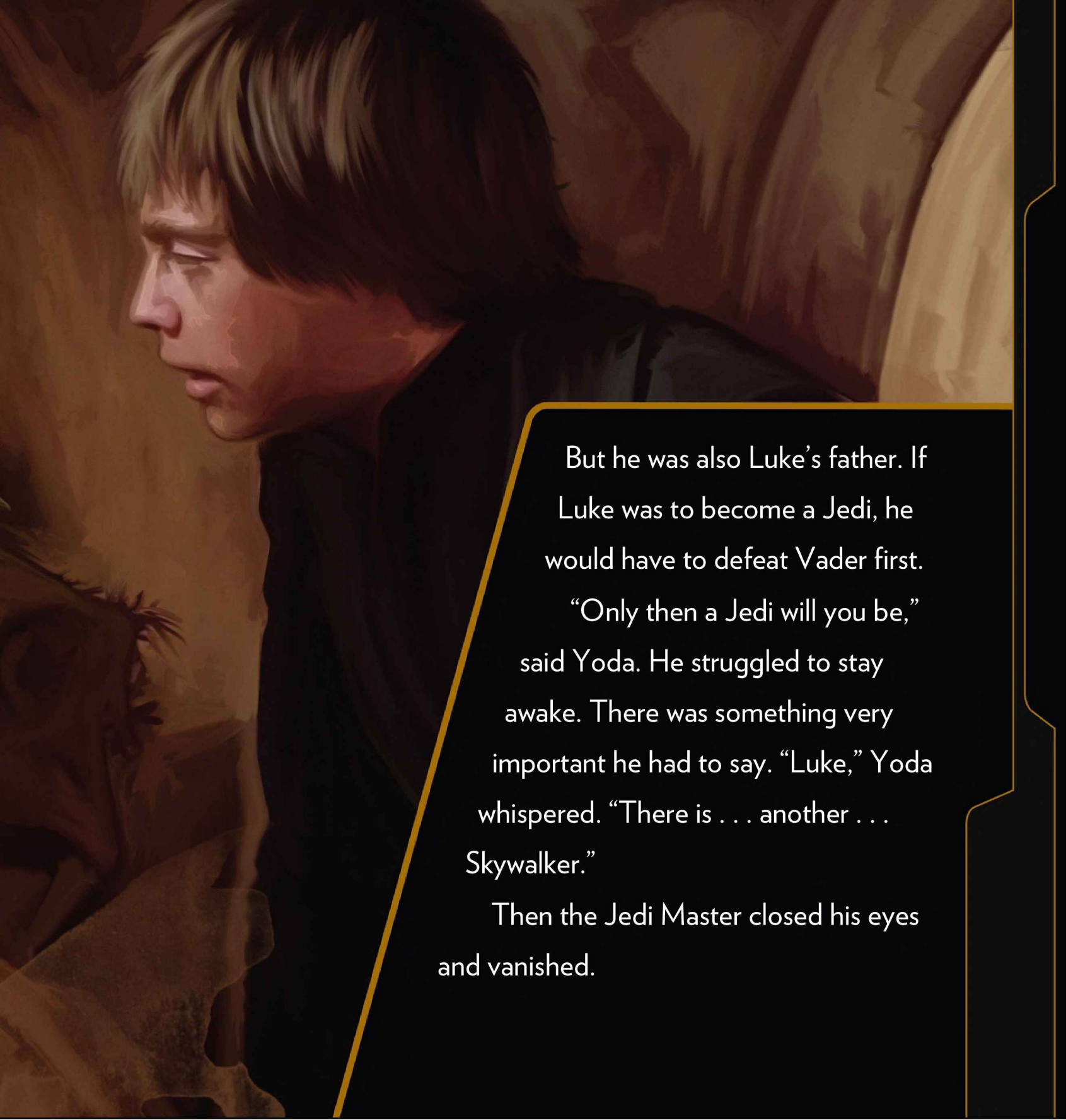




“Oh, heh, heh,” Yoda chuckled. He remembered being young and confident like Luke long ago.

Then his face grew serious. “Not yet. One thing remains. Vader. You must confront Vader.”

Darth Vader was one of the most evil members of the Empire.



But he was also Luke's father. If Luke was to become a Jedi, he would have to defeat Vader first.

"Only then a Jedi will you be," said Yoda. He struggled to stay awake. There was something very important he had to say. "Luke," Yoda whispered. "There is . . . another . . . Skywalker."

Then the Jedi Master closed his eyes and vanished.





Luke left Yoda's hut. He couldn't believe what the old Jedi had said. There was another Skywalker—another member of his family!

But something even heavier pressed on Luke's mind. He dreaded having to face Darth Vader. What if he couldn't defeat him? Or what if he wasn't strong enough to resist the dark side? So many people were counting on him, but Luke felt as though he was alone.

"I can't do it, Artoo," Luke said.
"I can't go on alone."

"Yoda will always be with you."

Luke looked up. He knew that voice. "Obi-Wan."

Suddenly, Luke's first Jedi Master, Obi-Wan Kenobi, appeared in the mist.





R E T U R N T O D A G O B A H

A hazy white glow surrounded the Jedi. Even though Obi-Wan was gone, the Force allowed him to come back and speak with Luke.

“I can’t face him,” Luke said. “There’s still good in him. I can’t battle my own father.”

Obi-Wan sighed. “Then the Emperor has already won. You were our only hope.”

Luke didn’t want to be responsible for the Emperor and Darth Vader’s taking over the galaxy. “Yoda spoke of another,” Luke said, remembering Yoda’s parting words.

Obi-Wan nodded. “The other he spoke of is your twin sister.”

Obi-Wan explained that Luke and his sister had been separated and hidden from Darth Vader when they were born to keep them safe.

Suddenly, Luke realized who his sister must be. “Leia! Leia’s my sister.”



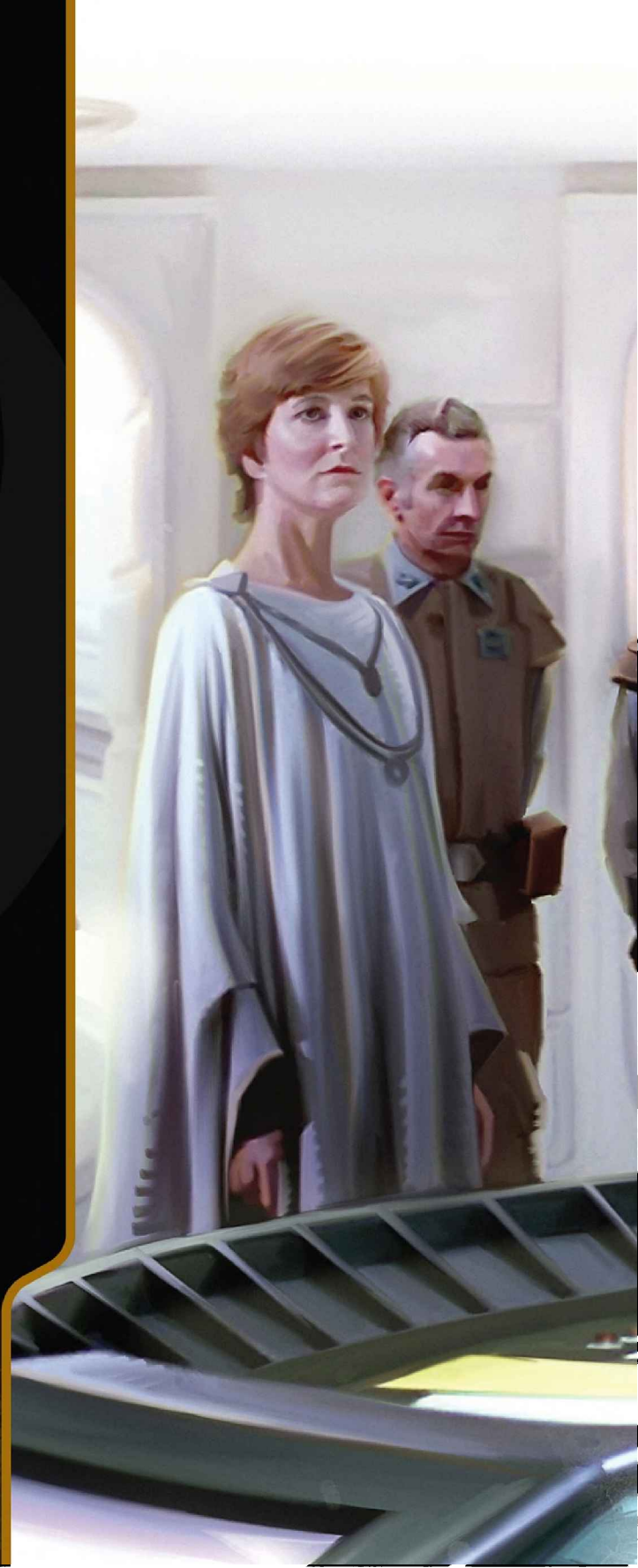
Quickly, Luke hopped into his X-wing and flew to where the Rebel Alliance was planning its next mission. He needed to get back to join the group—and his sister!

There, Han, Leia, Chewbacca, and the Rebels were meeting with Admiral Ackbar aboard his ship.

The admiral explained that the Rebels needed to take out the shield generator surrounding the new Death Star to defeat the Empire.

Han Solo volunteered to lead the strike team. Chewbacca and Leia immediately volunteered as well.

“I’m with you, too!” a voice suddenly called out.





It was Luke! Leia ran up to hug him. But she could tell something was wrong. “What is it?” she asked.

Luke smiled. “Ask me again sometime.” He would tell Leia the truth later, when there weren’t so many people around. But for the moment, he was glad to be back with his friends.

Luke knew he still needed to face Darth Vader. And it still terrified him. But he knew he wasn’t alone anymore. He had his friends—and his sister—to help him.





Flight and Fight!

“If they don’t go for this, we’re going to have to get out of here pretty quick, Chewie,” Han Solo said. He and his friends—Chewbacca, Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, C-3PO, and R2-D2—were nervous. They were flying the stolen Empire shuttle *Tydirium* toward the forest moon of Endor.

If their mission was successful, they could destroy the shield generator protecting the new Death Star—but only if they weren’t caught.





The friends were waiting quietly for clearance to land. They had sent the right code, but the Star Destroyer was taking too long. Han was about to fly away to safety, when the starship finally gave them permission to pass.

After the shuttle landed, Luke, Han, Leia, and their fellow Rebels moved into the forest to make their way toward the shield generator bunker.

Looking over a ridge, Luke, Leia, and Han spotted two Imperial biker scouts standing next to their speeder bikes.

“This whole party will be for nothing if they see us,” Han said. He and Chewbacca volunteered to take care of the scouts.

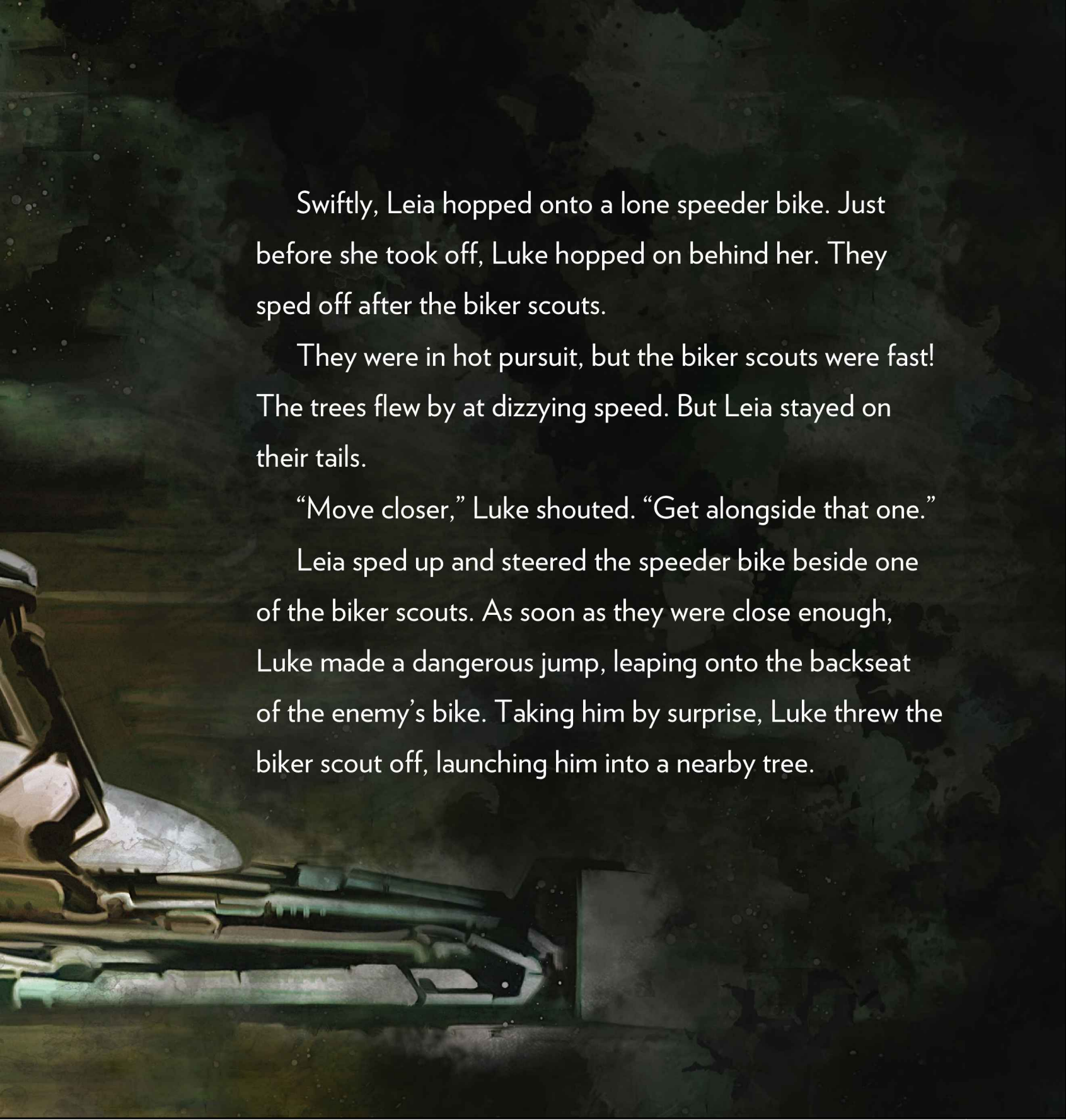




Han snuck up on the first biker scout. He drew his blaster. Just as he was about to attack the unsuspecting trooper, Han stepped on a twig, which made a loud *CRACK!*

The biker scout turned and punched Han. “Go for help! Go!” the first biker scout shouted to the second one. Luckily, Chewbacca used his bowcaster to shoot down the speeder bike. But two more unseen scouts hopped on their bikes and took off into the forest.



A dark, atmospheric illustration of a speeder bike in a forest at night. The bike is shown from a side profile, with its headlights and engine components visible. The background is a dense, dark forest with trees and foliage, creating a sense of mystery and danger. The lighting is low, with some highlights on the bike's body and the surrounding environment.

Swiftly, Leia hopped onto a lone speeder bike. Just before she took off, Luke hopped on behind her. They sped off after the biker scouts.

They were in hot pursuit, but the biker scouts were fast! The trees flew by at dizzying speed. But Leia stayed on their tails.

“Move closer,” Luke shouted. “Get alongside that one.”

Leia sped up and steered the speeder bike beside one of the biker scouts. As soon as they were close enough, Luke made a dangerous jump, leaping onto the backseat of the enemy’s bike. Taking him by surprise, Luke threw the biker scout off, launching him into a nearby tree.

Now it was two against one—Luke and Leia each had their own speeder bike as they chased after the last remaining biker scout. Or so they thought . . .

Two more biker scouts appeared behind them and began firing. “Keep on that one,” Luke said. “I’ll take these two.” Luke hit his brakes, and Leia’s speeder bike zipped ahead.

With his deft maneuver and quick thinking, Luke swung *behind* the enemies. Taking aim, Luke fired. One of the speeder bikes exploded as it crashed into a nearby tree.





Meanwhile, Leia was side by side with her target. But she wasn't prepared when he pulled his blaster and fired on her. A blast hit her speeder bike engine, throwing her off. Her speeder bike crashed.

The biker scout looked back victoriously and stopped paying attention for just a moment. *Boom!* He crashed, too. Relieved, Leia lost consciousness.

Elsewhere, Luke and his target were still fighting as they zipped through the massive trees. Dodging and weaving back and forth, the two were each trying to ram the other into a tree. But suddenly, the fronts of their bikes became entangled. Neither could get free.

Heading toward a tree, Luke had to make a decision. He jumped, narrowly avoiding a crash but freeing the scout's bike. The scout zipped past the tree. He began to turn—he was returning to finish off Luke.

Luke ignited his green lightsaber. The biker scout fired the bike's blaster. Shot after shot fired toward Luke, who deflected each one with his Force-trained reflexes. As soon as the speeder bike was close enough, he took aim . . .

With one clean swipe of his lightsaber, Luke severed the front outrigger and steering vanes. Spinning out of control, the speeder bike and its driver crashed.

“Whew,” Luke sighed.







Back where the speeder bike chase began, Han Solo and the other Rebels were waiting nervously. R2-D2 whined and beeped. “General Solo,” C-3PO translated, “someone is coming.”

Everyone prepared for another attack. But it was only Luke.



“Luke!” Han Solo said gladly . . . but then he noticed that the princess was missing. “Where’s Leia?”

“We got separated,” Luke said. “We better go look for her.”

“Take the squad ahead,” Han commanded the other Rebels. “We’ll meet at the shield generator at oh three hundred.” They still had to complete their mission and destroy the shield generator, but they also needed to find the princess.



Luke, Han, Chewie, and the droids left the safety of their group to find their friend. Being lost on an alien planet was not a good thing, especially not in enemy territory. They needed to find Leia, and fast. Little did they know that finding the princess would be the key to completing their mission.





Leia and the Ewoks





Princess Leia was in trouble! Stormtroopers had discovered that the Rebels were on the forest moon of Endor. Luke and Leia had managed to outsmart them on their speeder bikes, but Leia had gotten separated from Luke and was on her own. Worse, her speeder bike had been destroyed.

Suddenly, a short, fuzzy little creature came up to her. It was an Ewok named Wicket. He had never seen a human before, and he didn't like the look of Leia. He poked her gently with his spear.

Then the little Ewok's ears pricked up.

Before Leia could react, a blaster shot fired her way!

Wicket rolled under a log, out of sight, just as a stormtrooper came up behind Leia.

Wicket didn't want the stormtrooper to hurt his new friend. He smacked him on the leg with his spear!

Taking advantage of the distraction, Leia grabbed a thick tree branch and knocked the stormtrooper out. He wouldn't be going anywhere for a while.

Leia wanted to go back to her camp. But the fuzzy little Ewok had other plans. "Yub, yub," he said, leading her down a long, winding path deep into the forest.





Meanwhile, Luke, Han, Chewbacca, and the droids were searching for Leia. They were worried.


Suddenly, Chewie growled. He smelled a piece of meat—and he was hungry!

Chewie ran to where the meat was hanging from a tall stick.

“Wait, Chewie, don’t!” cried Luke.

But the warning came too late. When Chewie took the meat, a net rose around the friends and captured them. It was a trap!





R2-D2 used a mechanical blade to cut them out of the giant net. Luckily, the trap wasn't set by the stormtroopers. Unluckily, it was set by the Ewoks. The fuzzy little creatures surrounded Luke and the others, pointing their spears.

"Hey, point those things somewhere else!" Han said gruffly.

That made the Ewoks *mad*. They growled and moved even closer.

Suddenly, the Ewoks spotted C-3PO. The droid's gold metal body glinted in the sunlight. The Ewoks gasped! They began chanting and bowing toward him.

"It appears they believe I am some sort of god," C-3PO said.

Han was *not* happy to hear that. But Luke persuaded him and the others to go along with the Ewoks to their village.

They didn't want to hurt the creatures, so they'd need to figure out a way to escape without fighting.


When the friends arrived at the village, Leia was there.

“Leia!” Luke and Han exclaimed together.

“These are my friends,” Leia told the Ewoks. “They must be set free.”

But the Ewoks wouldn’t listen. They had tied up Luke, Han, and Chewie and were now lighting a fire beside them.






Luke had an idea. “C-3PO,” he said, “tell them that if they don’t set us free, you’ll become angry and use your magic.”

“But Master Luke, what magic?” C-3PO protested. “I couldn’t possibly—”

“Just tell them,” Luke said.

C-3PO began speaking in the Ewoks’ language. “*Toronto gosh! Ee-wey-de-sojah . . . BOOM!*”

The Ewoks were frightened, but not enough to stop their plans. They began to light the fire under Luke, Han, and Chewie!



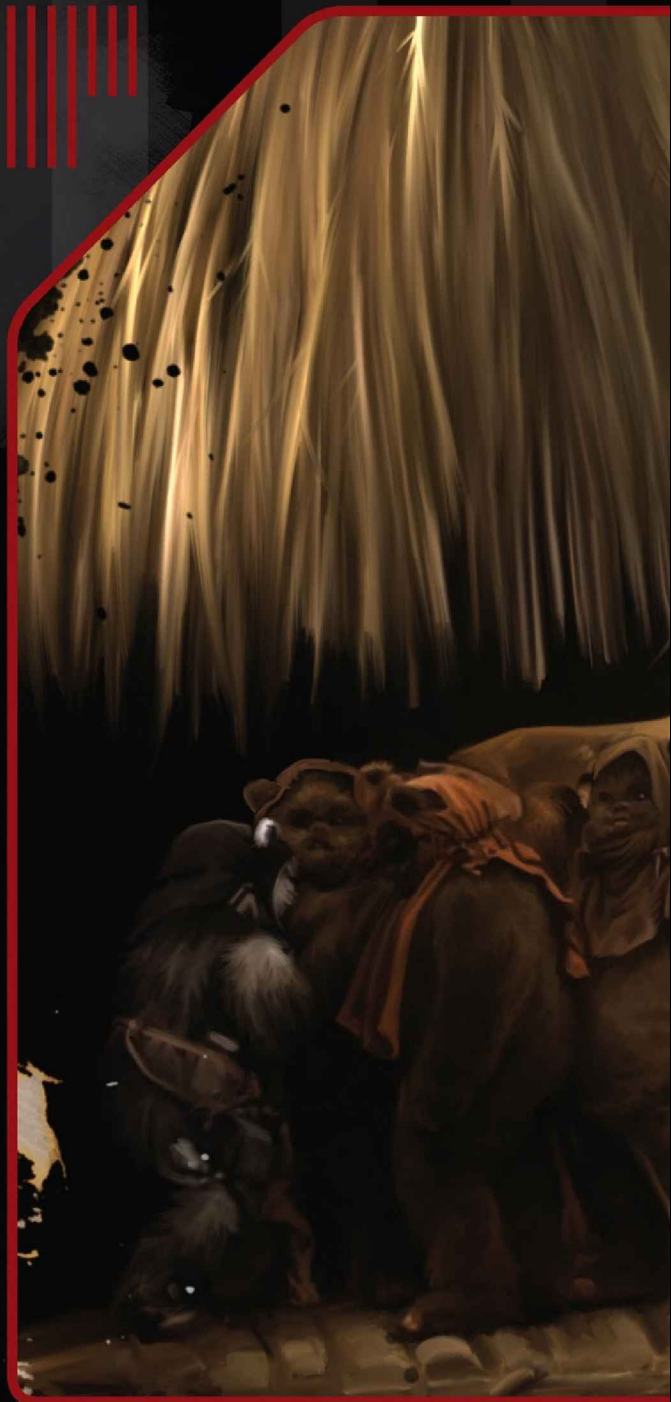
Just when Han was sure they were goners, Luke closed his eyes and concentrated. He used the Force to raise C-3PO, throne and all, into the air!

“Ahh! What’s happening?” C-3PO cried. “Master Luke, help!”

But Luke continued to use the Force and C-3PO hovered high over the Ewok tribe. The Ewoks were terrified!

Quickly, the Ewok leader, Chief Chirpa, ordered the others to set Luke, Han, and Chewie free. The tribe members obeyed and cut the friends loose.

Luke smiled and used the Force to lower C-3PO back to the ground.



LEIA AND THE EWOKS



Later that night, everyone listened as C-3PO told the Ewok tribe the whole story of the Rebels' adventures fighting the Empire (in the Ewoks' language, of course). Leia and her friends couldn't understand what C-3PO was saying, but they enjoyed listening anyway.

Suddenly, the Ewoks started chattering anxiously among themselves.



“What’s going on?” Han asked Leia.

Leia shrugged. “I don’t know.”

The Ewoks banged their ceremonial drums and started to sing.

“Wonderful!” C-3PO exclaimed. “We are now a part of the tribe.”

The Ewoks ran up to hug Han and Leia. Wicket was especially fond of hugging Han.

“Just what I always wanted!” Han said with a half grin, gently pushing the fuzzy little creature away.





Now the Ewoks would help the Rebels in their fight against the Empire. Both the Rebels and the stormtroopers had learned that although the Ewoks were small and cute, they would defend themselves when threatened.

The forest moon of Endor was their home, and the Ewoks would fight fiercely to keep the Empire from destroying it. The Rebels were glad to have the furry warriors on their side!



The Final Duel



On the forest moon of Endor, the Rebels were preparing for a major attack against the Empire. But Luke Skywalker had a different battle ahead of him. He knew that it was time to face his destiny and confront Darth Vader.

As Luke slipped away from his friends, Princess Leia followed him and tried to keep him from leaving. Facing Darth Vader was too dangerous!

“He’s my father,” Luke told Leia. If anything happened to Luke, Leia was the only hope for the Rebellion. “The Force is strong in my family. My father has it . . . I have it . . . and my sister has it.”

Shocked, Leia realized that she was Luke’s sister—a part of her had always known it. She couldn’t lose him now.

“There is good in him,” Luke told Leia. “I’ve felt it. I can turn him back to the good side. I have to try.” Luke hugged his sister, knowing that he might never see her again, and went to confront their father.



It didn't take long for Luke to find the Imperial camp and surrender himself to Darth Vader.

"The Emperor has been expecting you," Darth Vader said as soon as he saw Luke.

"I know, Father," Luke said. He looked at Darth Vader, the man who had once been Anakin Skywalker, the Jedi Knight. He knew that man still existed somewhere beneath the black armor of Darth Vader.





Darth Vader and Luke flew to the Death Star and were brought before Emperor Palpatine.

“Welcome, young Skywalker,” the Emperor said. “I have been expecting you. In time you will call me master.”

But Luke refused to turn on his friends. “You’re gravely mistaken. You won’t convert me as you did my father,” Luke told the Emperor.

The Emperor cackled. “By now you must know your father can never be turned from the dark side. So will it be with you.”

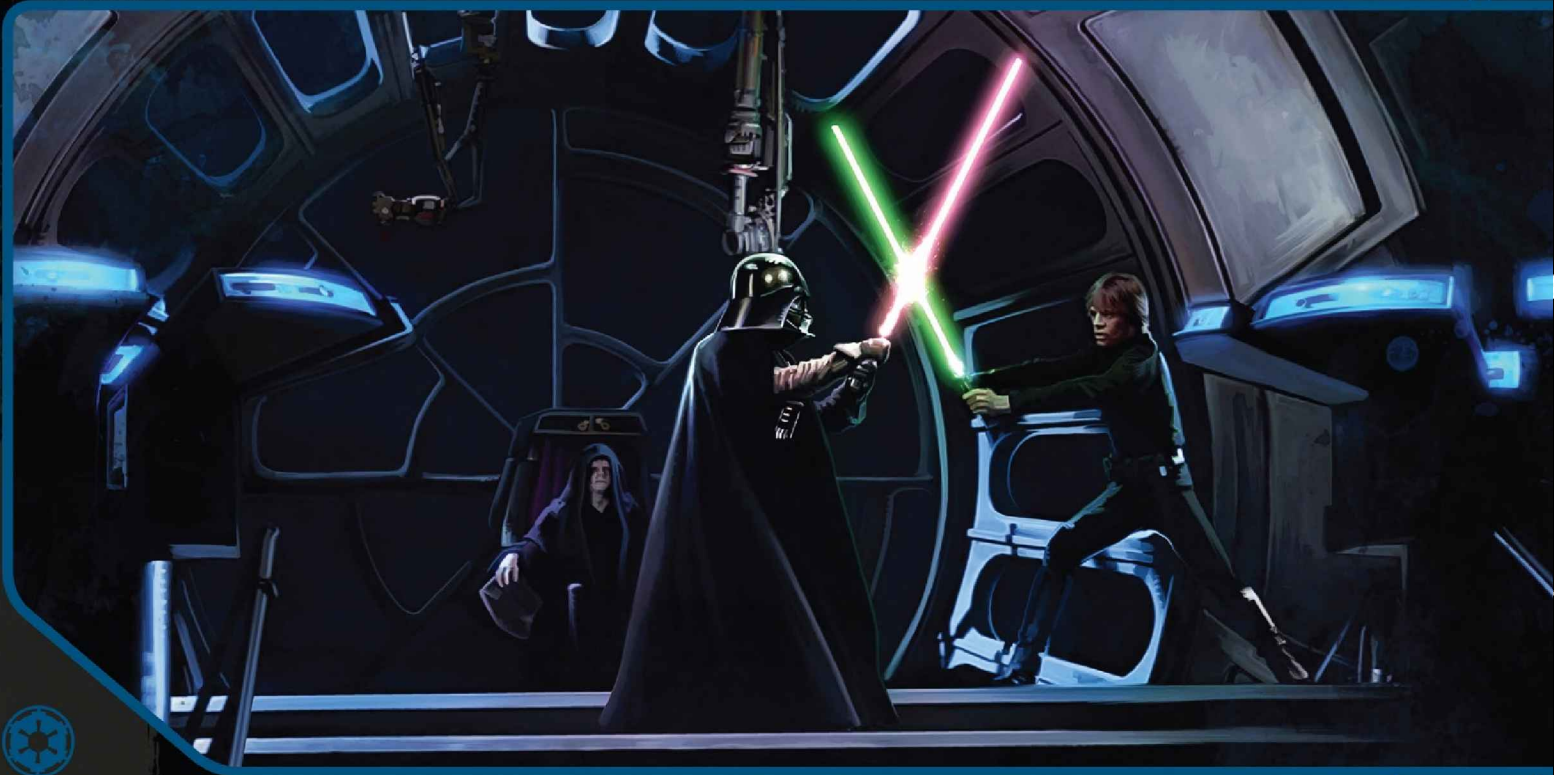


“Your friends are walking into a trap,” Palpatine said. He knew the Rebellion’s secret plans to attack and destroy the Death Star. Luke watched helplessly as Imperial forces ambushed the Rebel fleet.

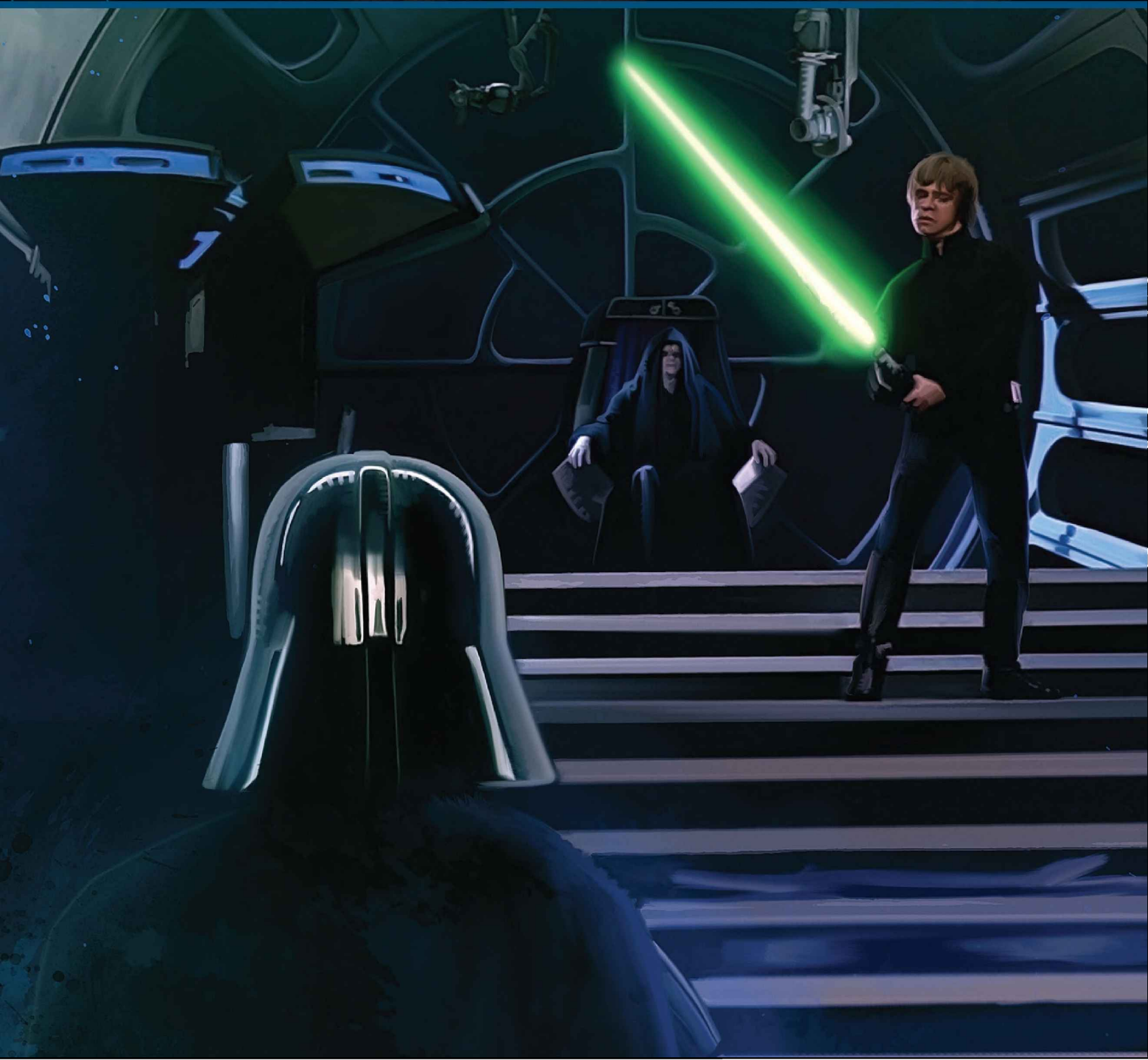
The Emperor held up Luke’s lightsaber. “The hate is swelling in you now. Give in to your anger. Strike me down with all of your hatred, and your journey to the dark side will be complete.”

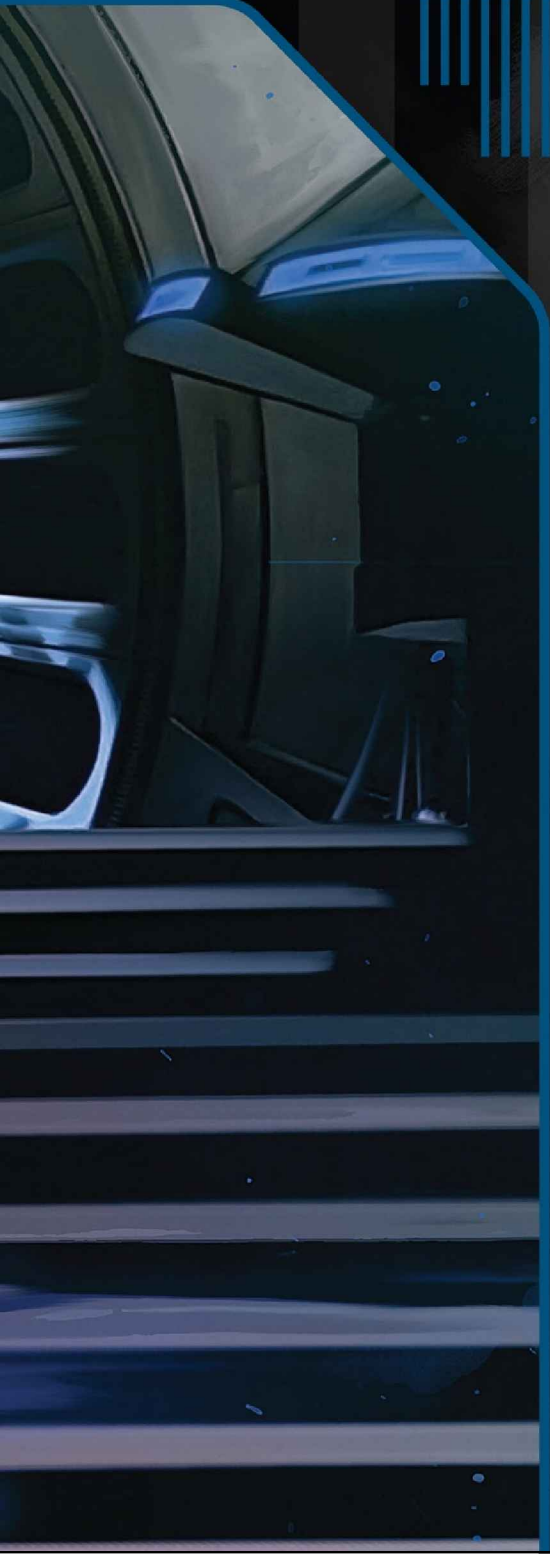
THE FINAL DUEL

Luke couldn't resist. He needed to help his friends. Using the Force, he snatched his lightsaber from the Emperor's throne. His green blade cut through the air as, with a great swing, he brought his weapon down to strike the Emperor. But Darth Vader was faster. The Sith Lord's red lightsaber clashed against Luke's, stopping it just before it hit Palpatine.



STAR WARS STORYBOOK COLLECTION





Luke pushed back against Darth Vader's lightsaber. The father and son dueled. Their weapons clashed again and again. Finally, Luke saw an opening. He forced Darth Vader back and kicked him down a flight of stairs.

The Emperor cackled with glee. "Good! Let the hate flow through you!"

Luke realized too late that he had done just what the Emperor wanted. He had given in to his hate.

Luke shut off his lightsaber and said, "I will not fight you, Father."

Darth Vader crept closer to Luke. "You are unwise to lower your defenses!" Darth Vader cried, raising his lightsaber to strike the young Jedi down.



But Luke had anticipated Darth Vader's move, and he drew his lightsaber to deflect his father's just in time. The two lightsabers met, crackling with energy.

Luke leapt down from the Emperor's platform then disappeared into a small alcove. He needed to figure out what to do next.

"You cannot hide forever," Vader said. "Give yourself to the dark



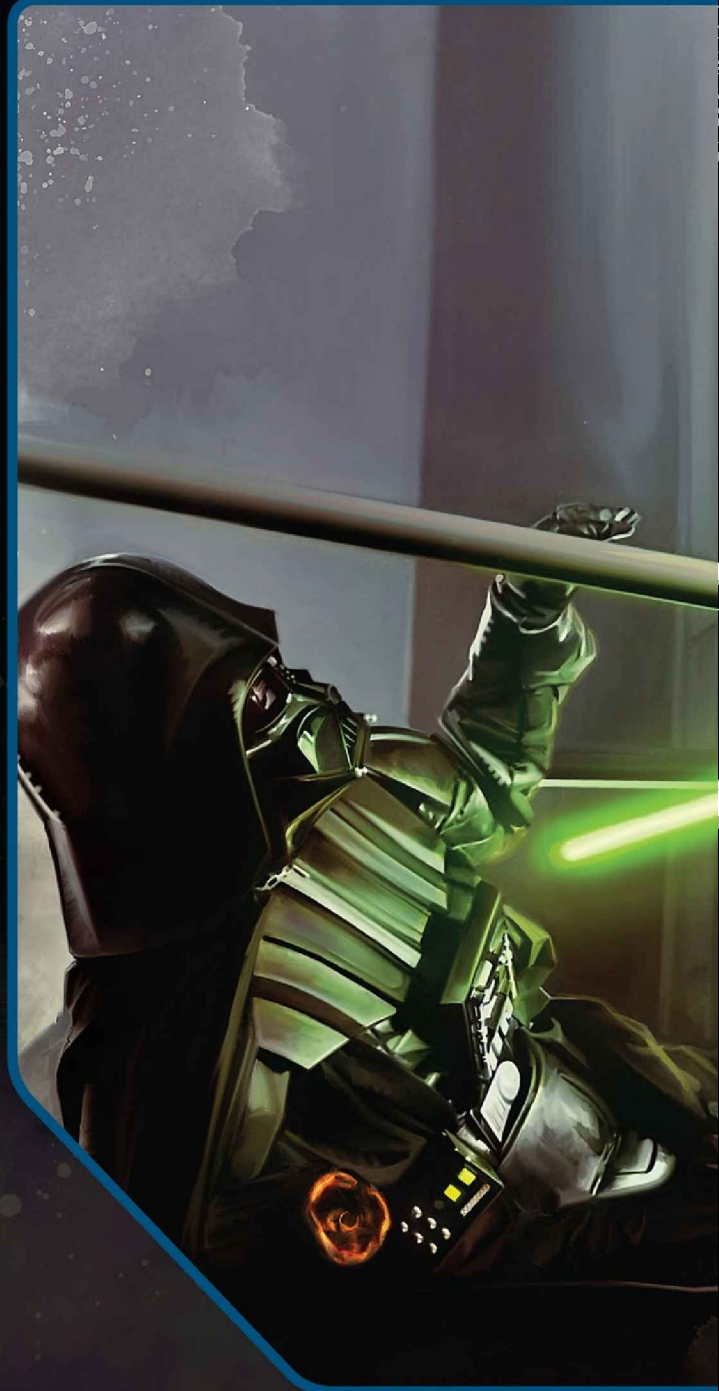
side. It is the only way you can save your friends.”

Luke tried not to think about Han, Leia, and his other friends in the Rebellion. But all he could see was their faces.

“Your thoughts betray you,” Vader said. “Your feelings for them are strong. Especially for . . . Sister! So you have a twin sister! If you will not turn to the dark side, then perhaps she will!”

Luke cried out as he charged toward Darth Vader. Luke hated the Empire and what it had done to his family. And he hated what it was trying to do to him. In that moment, Luke decided he would stop the Emperor and his forces—no matter what.

Luke attacked Darth Vader and the lightsaber battle began anew. Surprised, Darth Vader fell back. There was nothing he could do against his son's anger. Luke's lightsaber struck Darth Vader's over and over again until, with one final swing, Luke cut off Darth Vader's hand!



THE FINAL DUEL





Luke stopped and looked at what he had done. By giving in to his hate, he had destroyed the person he had been trying to save. This wasn't the way of the Jedi Knight. This wasn't who he was.

"Never. I'll never turn to the dark side," Luke said, throwing his lightsaber away.

THE FINAL DUEL

The smile on the Emperor's face disappeared. "So be it . . . Jedi. If you will not be turned, you will be destroyed." The Emperor raised his hands. Force lightning shot from his fingertips and hit Luke!

Luke fell to the ground as Darth Vader rose to take his place by the Emperor's side.

"Father, please! Help me!" Luke cried.

"Now, young Skywalker . . . you will die," the Emperor said.





Darth Vader looked at the Emperor, a master he had followed for so long. Then he looked at Luke, the son who had tried to save him. He realized that he had been wrong to give up hope. He still had a choice—and he chose Luke.

Darth Vader lunged at the Emperor. Holding him high above his head, Darth Vader walked to the edge of a long, endless pit. The Emperor's Force lightning pulsed through Darth Vader, painfully wounding him. But he gathered his strength, and with a great heave, he threw Palpatine over the side.

Anakin Skywalker had defeated the Emperor.



THE FINAL DUEL

Luke ran to his father. With the Emperor gone, they had to get off the Death Star soon. But Anakin knew that it was too late for him. He asked Luke to take off his mask.

“But you’ll die,” Luke said.

“Nothing can stop that now,” Anakin replied. Luke quickly removed his father’s mask. Anakin smiled as he looked at Luke for the first time with his own eyes.



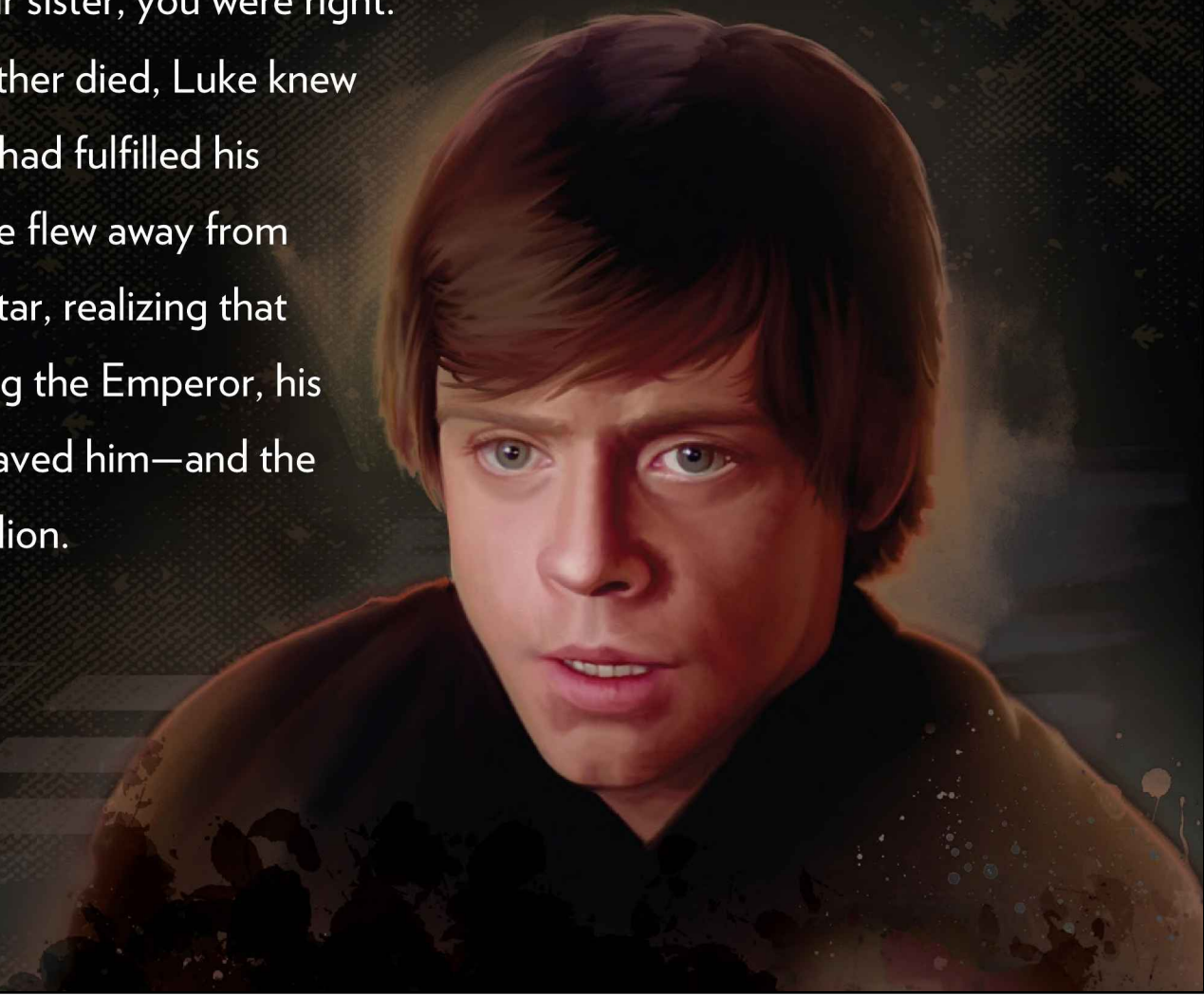
“Now . . . go, my son,” Anakin said. “Leave me. . . .”

“No. You’re coming with me. I’ve got to save you,”

Luke begged his father.

Anakin smiled. “You already have, Luke. You were right. . . . You were right about me. Tell your sister, you were right.”

As his father died, Luke knew that Anakin had fulfilled his destiny. Luke flew away from the Death Star, realizing that by destroying the Emperor, his father had saved him—and the entire Rebellion.





The Battle for Endor

STAR WARS STORYBOOK COLLECTION





Han Solo and Princess Leia peeked over the forest foliage.

“The main entrance to the control bunker is on the far side of that landing platform,” Leia said. “This isn’t going to be easy.”

Han and Leia were on the forest moon of Endor on a mission to take down the shield protecting the Empire’s Death Star. If Han and Leia didn’t succeed, there would be no way for the Rebel fleet to destroy the weapon.

The way to the bunker was blocked by a platoon of stormtroopers and Imperial officers. It would take an army to get past them. An army Han and Leia didn’t have.

Behind them, Wicket the Ewok began to talk excitedly to his friend Paploo. “What’s he saying?” Leia asked C-3PO.

C-3PO explained that the Ewoks knew about a secret entrance to the bunker. They followed Wicket around the Imperial base to a second doorway. There were fewer biker scouts at that entrance.

“This shouldn’t be too much trouble,” Han said.

But before Han could do anything, Paploo ran out of hiding and grabbed a speeder bike. Then he raced into the forest!



The biker scouts rushed after the Ewok. It was just the diversion Han and Leia needed.

Han told C-3PO and R2-D2 to stay in the forest. The rest of the Rebel troops hurried into the bunker. Han and his Wookiee friend, Chewbacca, quickly got to work planting charges.

But before Han and Chewbacca could destroy the shield, a new platoon of Imperial troops rushed into the bunker. Chewbacca growled, but there was nothing he or Han could do. They were caught!



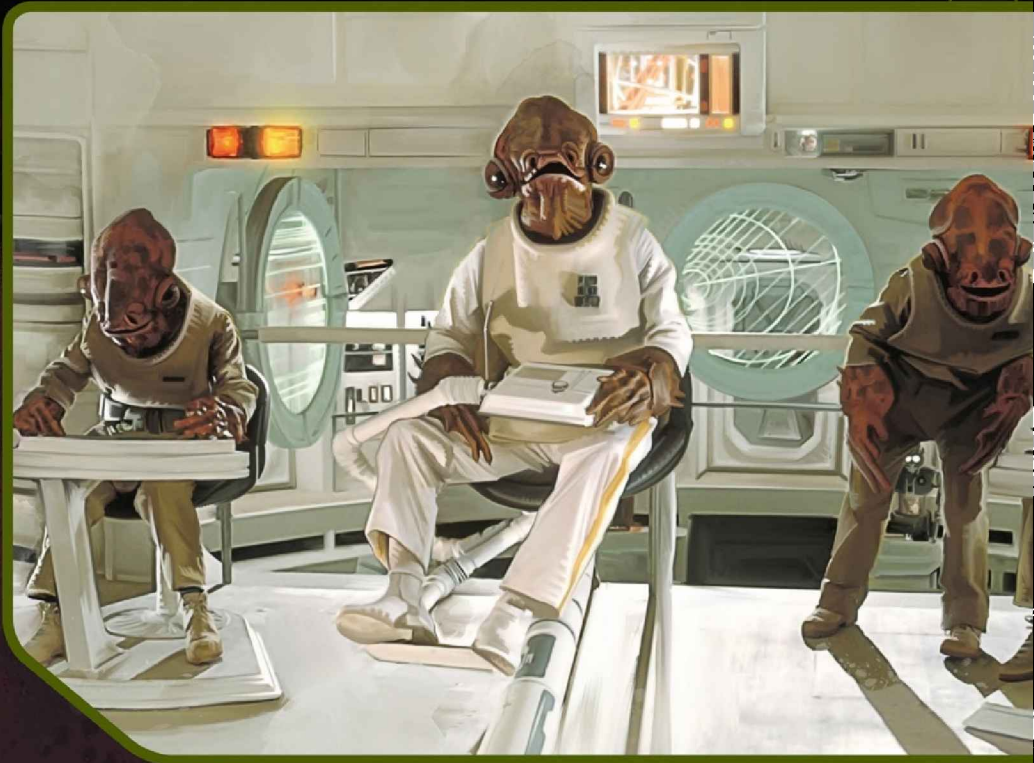
Meanwhile, above Endor, Lando Calrissian flew the *Millennium Falcon* toward the Death Star. The rest of the Rebel fleet flew behind him as they all began to ready their attack.

Lando looked at the ship's controls. "We've got to be able to get some kind of reading on that shield, up or down," Lando said to his copilot, Nien Nunb.

Nien Nunb grunted back. The Death Star was jamming their readings.



“How could they be jamming us if they don’t know . . . if we’re coming?” Lando said. Suddenly, he realized the Rebellion had made a mistake. The Emperor must have discovered their plans!



“Take evasive action,” cried Admiral Ackbar, the leader of the Rebel fleet. “It’s a trap!”

Out of nowhere, Imperial TIE fighters raced toward the Rebel fleet, firing laser bolt after laser bolt. Rebel X-wings zoomed past Lando to fight back. They had to defend themselves until Han and Leia could destroy the shield.





On Endor, C-3PO and R2-D2 had a plan.

“Hello! I say, over there! Were you looking for me?” C-3PO cried out to the Imperial troops from his hiding place in the forest.

Stormtroopers ran to capture C-3PO and R2-D2, but just as they reached the droids, there was a great battle cry. It was the Ewoks!

Han and Leia watched in amazement as the Ewoks attacked. They shot arrows and slung rocks to take down the stormtroopers. An Ewok even attacked the Imperial forces from the air!



With the Imperial forces distracted, Han and Leia had no trouble escaping. It was time to get to the bunker and take down the shield!

But when Han and Leia reached the bunker's doors, they were closed tight. This was a job for R2-D2.

"Artoo, where are you? We need you at the bunker right away," Leia called over the comlink.

Across the battle, R2-D2 whistled at C-3PO. "What do you mean, you're going?" C-3PO said. "No, wait! Artoo! Come back!" But R2 refused to stop, so C-3PO followed his friend. He knew he was going to regret it.



Meanwhile, Lando saw the Death Star fire on the Rebel fleet. It was still under construction. It wasn't supposed to be operational yet!

Admiral Ackbar saw it, too. "All craft prepare to retreat," he said.

"Han will have that shield down. We've got to give him more time," Lando said. If the Rebel fleet retreated now, they wouldn't get another chance to destroy the Death Star.

The Ewoks were still bravely fighting the stormtroopers. With a great crash, the Ewoks released an avalanche of logs that brought down an Imperial walker! But soon another walker took its place. Han and Leia needed to get into the bunker—fast.

R2-D2 reached Leia. He had just plugged into the bunker controls when there was a great explosion. The droid slammed back against the bunker door and sparks flew everywhere.

R2 was hit!

Han looked at the droid in alarm. “Well, I suppose I could hot-wire this thing,” he said, getting to work.






But before Han could open the door, an Imperial walker stormed up—right in front of them!

Strangely, the walker didn't fire. Instead, the top hatch opened. It was Chewie! He and two Ewoks had stolen the machine. That gave Han an idea.





THE BATTLE FOR ENDOR

Han used the Imperial walker's communications to trick the Imperial officers into thinking the Rebellion had lost the battle. When the Imperials opened the bunker's door, they were met by the Rebel army!

With the Imperial forces defeated, Han and Chewie quickly finished planting the charges. "Move! Move!" Han ordered his troops, and he hurried away from the bunker. There was a huge explosion. The bunker was destroyed, taking down the Death Star's shield!

Now the Rebel fleet could attack the Death Star's main reactor. "Here goes nothing!" Lando cried.

The *Millennium Falcon* flew through a gap in the Imperial defenses and into the long corridors of the Death Star. But it wasn't alone. TIE fighters flew after the Rebel forces, firing laser bolts!



One pilot, Wedge Antilles, spotted the main reactor. Together, Wedge and Lando fired. The reactor exploded into a million pieces.

Wedge and the *Millennium Falcon* raced back toward open space, but the corridors were collapsing around them. Behind them there was a great fiery explosion—and it was gaining on them! Lando and Wedge didn't have much time.

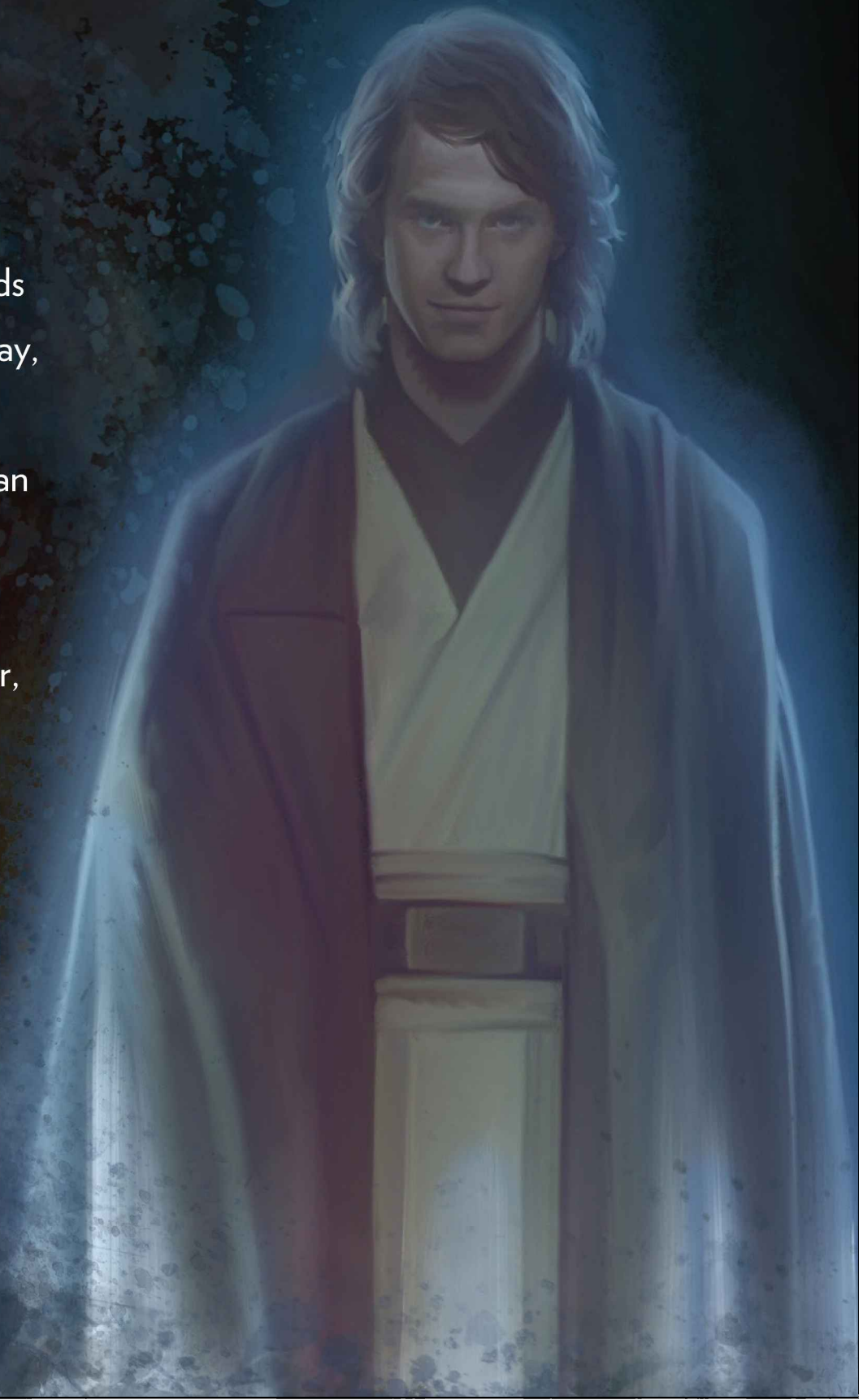
Just before it was too late, the Rebel ships reached the end of the tunnel. They shot into space as the Death Star exploded behind them!





That night, the Rebel troops celebrated with the Ewoks. Lando, Chewbacca, and Han hugged—friends until the end. C-3PO danced with Wicket as R2-D2 whistled in celebration. Soon Luke joined them. Leia ran to hug her brother, the Jedi Knight, who had survived his battle with the evil Emperor.

Luke smiled, glad to see how happy his friends were. As he stepped away, he saw the Force spirits of Jedi Masters Obi-Wan Kenobi and Yoda. And there with them was his father, Anakin Skywalker, once again a Jedi. Luke hoped he could make them proud.







Leia ran over to bring Luke back to the celebration. They had so much to tell each other. But it could wait. Tomorrow, the galaxy would awaken to a new day without the Empire: a day of freedom, possibility, and new hope.

